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Squire Elisha Pitkin House
East Hartford, Connecticut

HABS No. Conn. 18

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Connecticut

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Conn.

SQUIRE ELISHA PITKIN HOUSE

East Hartford, Hartford County, Connecticut

Owner: William Roberts

Date of Erection: 1758

Architect and builder: Not known

Present Condition: Very poor state of preservation
Modern lean-to addition

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Sandstone foundations
Frame, clapboard sidewalls
Brick chimneys
Shingled roof

Other Existing Records: "East Hartford: Its Traditions and History"
by Joseph O. Goodwin. Historical write-up.

List of Photographs:

1. Southeast Elevation
2. Northwest Elevation
3. Mantel of Music Room (North wall)
4. Detail of Stairs
5. Door Detail

DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED
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TRW 9/3/31

SQUIRE ELISHA PITKIN HOUSE
EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The town of East Hartford is bounded north by South Windsor, east by Manchester, south by Glastonbury and west by the Connecticut River and is remarkably level in its topography.

John Crow, an ancestor of Elisha Pitkin, Esq., was one of the first settlers and one of the original land-owners of East Hartford in 1639. In the affairs of the Colony, civil, military and judicial, the town of East Hartford was prominently represented through the influential Pitkin family and the people of East Hartford claim a large share in the part which the town took during the Revolutionary War.

Belonging to the Revolutionary period are the stories of the encampment of the French troops in 1781, when on their way from Newport to join Washington's forces in New York. The troops under command of Lt. Gen. Count de Rochambeau, who was subordinate only to Washington, met many times in this town and the Count boarded at Esquire Elisha Pitkin's. Tales of the barbecues in the meadows are told and of the huge carcasses of oxen roasted whole, the beasts having been beaten almost to a jelly, while yet alive to fit them for the fastidious palates of the foreigners. These cattle roasts and soup-making were held in Squire Pitkin's yard.

After the Sunday morning services at the meeting-house, people flocked to Squire Pitkin's kitchen to wait until the afternoon services. The sway of the First Society was undisturbed until about 1795 when the Baptists began to hold meetings in some of the houses and some of these meetings were held in the house of Elisha Pitkin, which for its hospitality to the old society and to the new orders, was called the "Minister's Hotel".

The pioneer of the Pitkin family in this country was William Pitkin, born in 1635 without the walls of London, England. He came to Hartford in 1659, was by profession a lawyer and was appointed King's attorney for the colony in 1665. He died in 1694. The Hon. William Pitkin, son of the above, was educated by his father in his profession of the law; he died in 1723. Hon. Col. Joseph Pitkin, son of William Pitkin, 2nd, was selectman and for a great many years, a representative of Hartford; he died in 1763. Elisha Pitkin, Esq., son of Col. Joseph Pitkin, was a trader and his house had a reputation of hospitality. Mr. Pitkin was a graduate of Yale University and for many years a magistrate and prominent citizen.

Source of Information: "East Hartford: Its History and Traditions" by Joseph O. Goodwin.

Author: Margaret M. Blake

Approved: Harold H. Davis Dist. Officer